



**Kurt E. Floren**  
Agricultural Commissioner  
Director of Weights and Measures

## COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

### Department of Agricultural Commissioner/ Weights and Measures

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**Richard K. Iizuka**  
Chief Deputy

DATE: October 29, 2009

TO: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman, Fourth District  
Supervisor Gloria Molina, First District  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, Second District  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Third District  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, Fifth District

FROM: Kurt E. Floren  
Agricultural Commissioner  
Director of Weights and Measures

SUBJECT: **MEDITERRANEAN FRUIT FLY ERADICATION**

Three specimens of Mediterranean Fruit Fly (Medfly), a major agricultural pest, were detected today, Thursday, October 29, on a single property in Santa Monica. All three were female, two were sexually mature, and had mated. In response, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) will be conducting an eradication operation.

The method of eradication will consist of Spinosad bait applications to host and ornamental trees on properties within 200 meters of the finds. This bait is applied via backpack hand sprayers. Fruit flies feed on the bait and are killed by the small amount of Spinosad in the bait. Spinosad is an organic product, derived from naturally occurring soil bacteria. Treatments will be repeated weekly for a minimum of six applications. We expect CDFA will begin these treatments within the next week, with homeowner permission, on the find site and properties immediately adjacent. No aerial bait treatments are planned. CDFA has an established response to this type of infestation that also includes cutting fruit on properties surrounding the find site in a search for Medfly maggots; placing 20 extra traps per square mile around the find site; and the increasing release of sterile Medflies, which is an ongoing program to disrupt the reproductive cycle, to 250,000 per square mile around the find site.

I am sending a letter to the Secretary of Food and Agriculture of California, concurring in his recommendation for the establishment of a quarantine and will be reviewing proposed boundaries within the next several days. A quarantine will restrict the movement of fruit and vegetable Medfly hosts from or through the area.

Medfly is one of the world's most destructive insect pests, damaging hundreds of different fruits and vegetables. Females pierce the skin of produce and deposit eggs that hatch into maggots, which tunnel and feed on the flesh, rendering the produce unfit for consumption.

We are informing the City Manager of Santa Monica and your Board offices in the treatment area to enable staff to answer questions from the public. I will continue to update you as details become available and warrant an update.

KF:RKI:ap

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer  
Brence Culp, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Safety  
Sachi Hamai, Executive Officer  
Board Deputies